

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS GROUP

WEEKLY SUMMARY NO. 34

For week ending 23 August 1949

Volume II

The International Week

25X6A

[REDACTED]

25X6A In the Palestine case, the US proposed to keep alive the stagnating activity of the PCC by shifting emphasis to an economic study of the refugee problem. Meanwhile, as a conclusion to the patient efforts of the UN Commission for Indonesia, the Dutch, Republicans and Federalists sat down to a round table conference at The Hague.

Issues before the Council of Europe. Three interrelated problems, the powers of the Assembly, European Human Rights and German membership, will test the Council of Europe during its initial session. The Consultative Assembly has thus far displayed considerable initiative in assuming a greater share of responsibility than the Statute implies; it has created a committee which will discuss amending the Statute to increase Assembly powers vis-a-vis the Committee of Ministers, and has replaced on the agenda the Human Rights item which the Ministers had deleted. The Human Rights issue includes proposals for (1) a European Human Rights Convention; (2) a commission to investigate alleged violations; and (3) a Human Rights Court empowered to call upon offending states to repeal national laws violating the convention. The adoption of such measures, involving sacrifice of traditional national sovereignty, would mark a significant step toward strengthening the Council and fostering European unity.

The admission of Western Germany to the Council would be accelerated by the adoption of a proposal to hold a special session in December or January. An extra session would help meet French desires for a probationary period during which the new West German State could demonstrate its fitness for inclusion, and would increase the likelihood of German admission before next year's regular session. The success with which these initial problems are handled will provide an indication of the future role of the Council of Europe in forging European political unity.

DOCUMENT NO. 34
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C

NEXT REVIEW DATE:
DATE: 800479 REVIEWER: 006514

US proposes shift in PCC emphasis. Recognizing the bleak outlook for achieving any political agreement at Lausanne, the US proposes that the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC) shift its major emphasis to the establishment of an Economic Survey Commission for the Near East. After a visit to Israel and the Arab states and study of the problem, it would report to the GA, through the PCC, its recommendations for economic development of the region and settlement of the refugee question. The immediate result of putting such a commission into the field will be to prolong the activity of the PCC, now almost at a standstill, through a subsidiary organ. This would make it easier to block off political discussion of the Palestine case in the next GA, which at this juncture might produce more acrimony than progress. Deferring discussion would please Israel but would not be as acceptable to the vocal Arabs, who undoubtedly will try to bring the issues into the open again.

In the long run, the task of the UN is to force sufficient concessions from the Israelis to counteract the Arab conviction that it has consistently thrown its weight in favor of Tel Aviv. Israel has thus far deftly been playing for time, consolidating its hold over its territorial conquests and replacing the former Arab inhabitants with Jews. To turn completely away from the political issues and concentrate merely on economic questions is susceptible of being construed as an acceptance of the political and territorial status quo, which would be objectionable to the Arabs. Moreover, there are practical difficulties in determining the capacity of the countries concerned to absorb refugees before boundaries are known. If the commission could turn up an acceptable aid program, however, it might lead to a solution of the Palestine refugee problem and thus facilitate a political settlement. Substantial inducements in the form of material aid both to Arabs and to Israelis would be required, however. In the last analysis, this calls for dollars and sterling, and unless these are assured, the report of the Economic Survey Commission will be likely to share the same fate as those of its many predecessors.

- 0 -

Soviet "leitmotif" in GA may emphasize Western economic problems. US economic difficulties, the British dollar crisis and the dissension within the OEEC as to dollar allocations, topics already stressed by Soviet propaganda, may well be reflected in the Soviet propaganda line at the forthcoming GA. The Kremlin will exploit the West's economic tribulations both as a cudgel for belaboring the responsible governments and as an inducement to the Western nations to accept the proffer of Soviet "cooperation." Citing the US as the villain of the piece, the USSR may elaborate on the fatal implications to mankind of the present plans of the capitalist and imperialist states. The UK will be taunted for surrendering its economic sovereignty to the US Marshall planners; and together with France, Italy and Benelux, the British will be depicted as

- 2 -

stooges whipped into line by US dollars and fatally linked to the crisis-ridden US economy. The aggressive policies of the US will be sharply contrasted with the USSR's peaceful intentions as evidenced by the Soviet role in the CFM and its sponsorship of early peace treaties, Peace Congresses, disarmament, prohibition of the atomic bomb, and East-West trade. Through such propaganda the USSR would seek to (a) ease East-West tension and lull the West into a false sense of security; (b) drive a wedge between the Western governments and between the respective Governments and their peoples; (c) restore East-West trade, thereby obtaining much-needed capital equipment and machinery for the USSR and its Satellites.

- 2 -

The UN Technical Assistance Program. The resolution on Technical Assistance to Underdeveloped Countries recently adopted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meets the US position in all essentials and will probably be adopted by the Fall General Assembly substantially as it stands. ECOSOC proposed the following organizational machinery: a Technical Assistance Committee of the Council (TAC), and a Technical Assistance Board (TAB), composed of the executive heads of the UN and the Specialized Agencies concerned, which is to make recommendations to ECOSOC through TAC. Thus TAB will provide a centralized body in which assistance projects can be examined and coordinated with the agencies which will handle the actual implementation of the program. The first \$17 million contributed is to be divided on the following basis: TAC, 29%; UN, 23%; WHO, 22%; UNESCO, 14%; ILO, 11%; and ICAO, 1%. The amounts to be contributed by member nations and other financial aspects of the program are to be worked out by a Technical Assistance Conference which will meet during, or shortly after, the September GA.

- 3 -

Dissension over allocation of ECA aid. Britain's flat rejection of the \$840 million allocation tentatively proposed by the OEEC has sharpened the clash between the ECA countries over the division of 1949/50 US aid. The UK delegate objected sharply that the UK estimates of its requirements were not given the same consideration as those of other countries. These nations, too, virtually all of which face a 20-30% cut in their 1949/50 aid requests, are protesting bitterly at the prospective reductions. The dispute is placing great strain on the OEEC which, because it must reach decisions unanimously, will find great difficulty in reconciling divergent views. It is likely that the OEEC will increase the UK allocation, though hardly enough to meet even minimum British demands.

- 3 -

WFTU throws full weight behind national strikes. Recent wage and hour demands by Communist labor in France and Finland reflect the current WFTU tactic of urging its affiliates to force nation-wide strikes based on such "legitimate" union demands in an effort to retard production and stimulate inflation in non-Soviet countries. Conscious of the failure of the more directly political strikes of last year to arouse widespread worker support, the WFTU is now apparently concentrating more on exploitation of genuine workers' grievances to achieve the same end. Recent conferences which formed WFTU industrial departments for the miners (Florence), metal workers (Turin), textile workers (Lyon), and construction workers (Helsinki), stressed the importance of such trade union action. As a consequence, local Communist affiliates of the WFTU (the French CGT, Italian CGIL, Finnish transport workers, etc.) are apparently under instructions to replace their hitherto flexible programs for labor agitation with coordinated demands for wage increases, shorter hours and increased benefits. Initial strikes by Communist unions within individual industries are to be rapidly extended, whenever feasible, to a walk-out of all Communist unions in every industry where Communist influence is effective. The broad objective will be to set in motion a series of "sympathy strikes" in the hope of obtaining sufficient non-Communist worker backing to snowball into a general strike. In order to achieve such widespread strike action, the interested WFTU industrial departments will probably supply financial and organizational aid (as they did in the London dockers strike) whenever the investment promises substantial returns.

- 0 -

Communist fronts in colonial areas. The decision of the nationalist Tunisian labor federation (UGTT) to adhere permanently to the World Federation of Trade Unions reflects the success of the strong appeal which the WFTU and the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) are currently making to nationalist parties in the colonial areas. The ability of the Communist-front organizations to promote nationalist-Communist cooperation in these areas is enhanced by the Communist support of the cherished nationalist aim of independence. At its Festival and World Youth Congress in Budapest, attended by delegates from French, North and West Africa, Indonesia, and Madagascar, the WFDY is giving priority to consideration of measures for "active assistance" to the youth movements of colonial Africa and Southeast Asia. In the remaining months of 1949 the WFTU, WFDY and their sister organization, the International Democratic Womens Federation, will probably exert increasing efforts to exploit fully the theme of "national independence" in the colonial and dependent areas.

- 4 -

India's SC candidacy. With the US and UK supporting India as a replacement for Canada in the Security Council and with no strong opposition so far apparent, India will certainly be elected by the next GA. Honoring India with the second British Commonwealth seat in the SC should tend to knit New Delhi more closely to the Commonwealth. By increasing Indian prestige, it should help build up India as a potential leader in Southwest Asia against Communist expansion. On the other hand, Pakistan may well argue that the Kashmir embroilment disqualifies India for SC membership. However, Egypt's election to the SC last year despite its involvement in the Palestine case would furnish a precedent.

- 0 -

Revival of Evatt proposals on the Greek question. UN Secretary General Lie has expressed his desire to ask the Yugoslavs whether they are now prepared to accept the final text of the proposals made by GA President Evatt last spring. The Greek UN representative, with whom Lie discussed his plan, advised that great caution should be exercised in view of the extremely delicate state of Greek-Yugoslav political relations. Lie agreed and will not reveal his previous consultations with the Greeks when he broaches the subject to the Yugoslav UN representative after the GA convenes. If he receives a positive response, Lie intends to utilize the same approach with the Bulgarians.

- 0 -

Brazil will not sponsor Spanish question. According to its UN representative, Brazil will probably not introduce the Spanish question in the September session of the General Assembly. Brazil is evidently unwilling to suffer another defeat on this issue, and loss of Brazilian sponsorship decreases the likelihood that this question will be reopened in the coming GA.

- 5 -

GREAT POWER VIEWS ON ITALIAN COLONIES

As the 1949 UN General Assembly prepares to make a second stab at disposal of the former Italian colonies, the key Western powers have altered their positions to meet the new realities of the situation, particularly the strong demand for Libyan independence. Following the defeat of the Bevin-Sforza plan last May the US and UK, aware of the strong GA opposition to anything less than early independence for Libya, have come to favor this step. They continue to support cession of the bulk of Eritrea to Ethiopia and Italian trusteeship over Somaliland, the latter as a gesture to Italy. On the crucial question of whether the three parts of Libya should be unified, however, UK willingness to see a united Libya is tempered by concern over French opposition.

France, not Italy, now seems likely to be the chief obstacle to US-UK plans. The French, fearful over possible repercussions of early Libyan independence on nationalist elements in French North Africa, prefer a more gradual approach which would allow them to make any necessary adjustments in their own areas. While France will reluctantly accept independence for Cyrenaica, it strongly opposes a similar status for Tripolitania or unification of the two under the Senussi, whose religious influence in FNA it fears.

Italy, abandoning its efforts to secure a Tripolitanian trusteeship, now more realistically favors immediate Libyan independence, hoping to capitalize on the favorable Arab reaction thus gained to secure a special position in Tripolitania similar to that of the UK in Cyrenaica. The Italians, ever reluctant to see their cherished Eritrea go to Ethiopia, are backing independence for that colony as well. Though professing little interest in Somaliland, the most worthless of the three colonies, they would probably accept a trusteeship.

The USSR, which at the last GA session proposed direct UN trusteeship for all three colonies and early independence, will have the ground cut out from under its anti-colonial stand by Western advocacy of Libyan statehood. The USSR will probably be forced to fall back upon criticizing the "fictional" nature of any Libyan independence and stressing the puppet character of the regimes. Should a deadlock occur over Eritrea and Somaliland, however, it is possible that the Soviet trusteeship proposal, also favored by UN Secretary General Lie, would be accepted as an alternative.